

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS BANGKOK 006727

SIPDIS

INFO ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS  
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OVIP](#) [CASC](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [TH](#)

SUBJECT: THAI EXPECTED TO INVITE FORMER PRESIDENTS TO  
TSUNAMI COMMEMORATION

SIPDIS

1. This is an action request. Please see paragraph 3.

2. The Thai government is planning a large commemoration ceremony on December 26 in memory of those who died in the 2004 tsunami. Post's consular section is already working with the families of victims and Americans who were affected by the disaster who wish to participate in the event. Because relatively few Americans were in the tsunami zone, we expect at most a few dozen of these American participants.

3. Post has been told informally by the Thai that they expect to invite former presidents Bush and Clinton, whose work to promote tsunami relief was so warmly appreciated by the Thai people and government. Former Secretary Powell might also be included in the invitation, although this is less clear. The ceremony will be held in Phuket, the area most severely affected by the disaster, with smaller commemorations held at different locations around the island. Prime Minister Thaksin will preside over the main commemoration ceremony. We fear that the RTG will not produce a formal invitation for the former presidents until very late. Logistical arrangements for flights and acceptable hotels will be difficult, as both are scarce. Other embassies, which are anticipating the arrival of hundreds of their citizens, are already booking rooms. If either VIP does attend, post will need to start soonest to ensure transportation and accommodation. ACTION REQUEST: Therefore, we request Department check informally to determine whether either of the former presidents would accept an invitation to attend the ceremony. Participants would need to arrive in Bangkok no later than 12/24 and plan to fly into Phuket no later than 12/25 to be in place for the ceremony on the morning of 12/26. We also request a rough head-count of travelers who would accompany, including any representatives from the Department. End Action Request.

KEUR